

cotton, but this manner of facilitating navigation may have been of European introduction. To-day the Indians make sails from canvas or other imported cloth, and employ them on the sea, lagoons, and the larger rivers. 501

RAFTS.—In descending the rivers the Indians also make use of rafts (M.: *publak*; T., P.: *pala, dana*; U.: *lim*). They are made by tying a number of balasa stems or other light wood together with the aid of lianas or vegetable fibers. For lack of other light woods at hand, banana stems are sometimes used for this purpose, but these soon become water-logged. The stems are generally half submerged, but on large balasa rafts the natives descend from the interior with heavy cargoes of merchandise or livestock.

SKILL AND ENDURANCE OF THE INDIAN BOATMEN.—Both Miskito and Sumu are remarkable for their skill and endurance as boatmen. They work in a rhythm, and at each thrust all the paddles lightly strike the gunwale of the canoe together. From time to time, at a sign of the bowman, all the paddles are lashed simultaneously with the flat part of the blade upon the surface of the water. 502

The river Indians of the interior are very skillful in the management of the canoes through the falls and rapids of the streams. When proceeding upstream the boat is generally hauled through a side channel, or overland with the aid of strong withes or lianas²³ which are fastened to the hole in the bow. But a greater danger consists in "shooting" the rapids, the canoe rushing with great speed down the crooked channel oversown with projecting rocks. One Indian stands in the bow with a pole balanced in the middle, with which he touches the rocks scattered in the river, in order to guide the dashing pitpan and ward it off from these dangers. Every one is silent and watchful except for the short, sharp words of direction from the bowman to the captain, who is at the stern and assists with the timely stroke of the paddle. If the canoe gets swamped, the Indians jump overboard and, hanging on to it with one hand, they bail out the water with the aid of a calabash.

DOMESTICATION OF ANIMALS AND BIRDS

INDIGENOUS ANIMALS.—Many indigenous animals are tamed to keep as pets. Of these the most frequently seen are the capuchin or white-faced monkey (*Cebus* sp.), the spider monkey (*Ateles* sp.), the howling monkey (*Alouatta* sp., syn. *Myocetes* sp.), paca (*Oryzomys* sp.) 231

²³ Many trees are covered with such parasitic vines or lianas which climb up the stem to the branches, from which they hang freely down like ropes in sizes from very thin ones to others measuring up to 2 and even 3 inches in diameter. They are stronger than string or rope and resist the influence of the climate much better.